

LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting of Joint Sub-committee on Class I and Class IV Vessels

Review of Examination Syllabuses and Systems for Certification of Coxswains of Local Passenger Carrying Vessels and Operators of Pleasure Vessels for Hire

Purpose

This paper aims at reviewing and strengthening the existing examination syllabuses and systems for the certification of coxswains of local vessels and operators of pleasure vessels to bring about continuous enhancement in the professional standards and refreshment of the navigational knowledge of coxswains operating local **passenger carrying vessels** and operators of **pleasure vessels for hire**.

Background

2. In response to the Lamma Island vessel collision, the Marine Department (MD) convened a meeting of the Local Vessels Advisory Committee on 26 October and discussed in detail with representatives of various industries issues such as deficiencies found during vessel safety spot checks, safety equipment and safety management, safety awareness, and safety measures for immediate implementation. Moreover, members of the meeting agreed that this joint sub-committee be set up to review the examination syllabuses and systems for the certification of coxswains operating local passenger carrying vessels and operators of pleasure vessels for hire, and to propose improvement measures to enhance maritime safety.

Areas to be considered for Improvement under the Review

3. Five areas are to be considered under the review:

3.1 The adequacy of the existing examination rules for certification of coxswains of local vessels and operators of pleasure vessels in ensuring that certificated coxswains and operators can safely operate passenger carrying vessels of various sizes and speeds permitted under their respective certificates;

(Annex 1: Existing examinations syllabuses for coxswains of local vessels and pleasure vessel operators.

Details of the examination rules can be obtained by following the links below:

http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/pdf/examrules_lv.pdf

http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/pdf/examrules_ploc.pdf

3.2 the proposed requirement that all applicants for the Coxswain Grade 3 Certificate examination, regardless of whether or not they are required to operate passenger carrying vessels, should have completed marine-related courses and produce employers' proof of practical work experience on board vessels;

3.3 the proposed requirement that coxswains of local passenger carrying vessels and operators of pleasure vessels for hire should pass an on-board practical test;

(Annex 2: Existing examination eligibility criteria for the coxswain certificate and the pleasure vessel operator certificate)

3.4 the proposed introduction of a validity period (e.g. 5 years) for the Coxswain Grade 1 Certificate, regardless of whether or not its holder is required to operate passenger carrying vessels. Certificate holders will be required to complete refresher courses before their certificates may be renewed; and

3.5 the proposed requirement that coxswains operating local fast speed passenger craft should hold a Type Rating Certificate.

Way Forward

4. It is proposed that the Joint Sub-committee hold a meeting every three weeks. It is hoped that a consensus can be reached on certain items of discussion by February next year. The overall review is expected to be completed by late 2013 and a report will be submitted to the Local Vessels Advisory Committee.

5. Depending on the outcome of the review and recommendations made by the Joint Sub-committee, MD will examine the most appropriate means, such as amending the relevant examination rules or legislative amendment, to implement the proposed improvement measures.

Advice Sought

6. Members' views are sought on the proposals set out above.

Marine Department

November 2012

A. Existing Examination Syllabuses for Coxswains of Local Vessels

1. Coxswain Grade 3 Examination

- 1.1 Sound knowledge of local waters/storms and of pilotage in such areas/circumstances.
- 1.2 Sound knowledge of those parts of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea as applicable to the marine traffic encountered in Hong Kong.
- 1.3 Seamanship and basic engine knowledge including action to be taken in the event of collision, grounding, fire or flooding.

2. Coxswain Grade 2 Examination

Part A (Written Examination and Chart work)

- 2.1 Local knowledge, pilotage and port regulations including the requirement to report accidents and the method of making reports, and knowledge on the use of VHF radio channels.
- 2.2 Ship stability.
- 2.3 Seamanship and shiphandling.
- 2.4 Chart work and pilotage.

Part B (Oral Examination)

- 2.5 Collision regulations, buoyage and emergencies.

B. Existing Examination Syllabuses for Pleasure Vessel Operators

3. Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 2 Examination (Written Examination)

Part A: Knowledge of navigation, seamanship and safety.

Part B: Engineering knowledge.

4. Syllabus for Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 1 Examination

Part A: Navigation (Written Examination).

Part B: Seamanship (Oral Examination).

5. Syllabus for Practical Test Conducted by the Hong Kong Sailing Federation

The practical test conducted for the issue of a Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 1 Certificate comprises a four-hour practical handling test on the following:

Part A: Pre-departure preparations.

Part B: Matters to take charge of while underway.

Part C: Matters to take care of after arrival.

A. Existing Examination Eligibility Criteria for the Coxswain Certificate

	<u>Class of Certificate</u>	<u>Applicability</u>	<u>Examination Eligibility Criteria</u>	<u>Examination Format</u>
1	Coxswain Grade 3 Certificate	Any local vessel other than a pleasure vessel, which is of not more than 15m in length and of not more than 16.5m in length overall	<p>(1) Be at least 18 years of age;</p> <p>(2) (a) has a minimum of 1 year of service in any deck or engineering capacity in any mechanized vessels other than pleasure vessels; or</p> <p>(b) has 2 years service on non-mechanized cargo vessels; or</p> <p>(c) has 2 years service on pleasure vessels whilst holding any type of pleasure vessel certificate of competency;</p> <p>(3) reaches the eyesight standard prescribed by the Marine Department.</p>	50 multiple choice questions to be answered within 50 minutes.
2	Coxswain Grade 2 Certificate	Any local vessel other than a pleasure vessel, which is of not more than 24m in length and of not more than 26.4m in length overall	<p>(1) Be at least 19 years of age;</p> <p>(2) (a) has a minimum of 1 year of service on board as a member of the deck crew of a local vessel whilst holding a Coxswain Grade 3 Certificate in any local vessels other than pleasure vessels; or</p> <p>(b) completion of a recognized, continuous, in service training course on commercial vessels of not less than 2 years;</p> <p>(3) reaches the eyesight standard prescribed by the Marine Department.</p> <p>In addition, an applicant will also be eligible for the issue of a Coxswain Grade 2 Certificate if he is at least 19 years of age and:</p> <p>(i) holds a Local Certificate of Competency as Master (60 Tons and under) issued under the provisions of the Shipping and Port Control</p>	Two-part examination: <u>Part A</u> – 40 multiple choice questions to be answered within 40 minutes and 1 hour of practical chart work; <u>Part B</u> – Oral examination.

			<p>Ordinance; or</p> <p>(ii) holds a valid Hong Kong foreign going or river trade Class 3 certificate of competency (Deck Officer) issued under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers)(Certification of Officers) Regulation; or</p> <p>(iii) holds a recognized equivalent certificate of competency for deck officer issued by a foreign administration, and passes a local knowledge examination.</p>	
3	Coxswain Grade 1 Certificate	Any local vessel other than a pleasure vessel, which is of gross tonnage not more than 1 600	<p>(1) Be at least 20 years of age;</p> <p>(2) holds the following recognized certificates issued by an approved training establishment:</p> <p>(a) Personal Survival Techniques (Local Craft), or equivalent certificate</p> <p>(b) First Aid, or equivalent certificate</p> <p>(c) Fire Fighting (Local Craft), or equivalent certificate;</p> <p>(3) has a minimum of 1 year of service on board local vessels, other than pleasure vessels, in the position of Coxswain or Assistant Coxswain. This year of service must be obtained while holding a Coxswain Grade 2 Certificate or a 60 Tons and under Master Certificate of Competency and at least six months of the time must be shown to have been spent in service aboard vessels greater than 15 m in length; and</p> <p>(4) reaches the eyesight standard prescribed by the Marine Department.</p>	No examination required.

B. Existing Examination Eligibility Criteria for the Pleasure Vessel Operator Certificate

	<u>Class of Certificate</u>	<u>Applicability</u>	<u>Examination Eligibility Criteria</u>	<u>Examination Format</u>
1	Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 2 Certificate	A pleasure vessel of not more than 15m in length overall not leaving Hong Kong waters	(1) Be at least 18 years of age; (2) reaches the eyesight standard prescribed by the Marine Department.	A written examination of 90 minutes.
2	Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 1 Certificate	All pleasure vessels not leaving Hong Kong waters	(1) (a) has obtained the Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 2 Certificate, or equivalent, for over 1 year and has vessel operation experience as the person in charge of a powered pleasure vessel or local vessel; or (b) has satisfactorily completed an approved training course and passed the approved practical test conducted by the Hong Kong Sailing Federation; (2) reaches the eyesight standard prescribed by the Marine Department.	Two-part examination: <u>Part A</u> – A written examination of 1 hour and 50 minutes; <u>Part B</u> – Oral examination.